

I am grateful that we are debating this bill. I am also grateful that this bill will be subjected to an amendment process. We have a lot of work to do. The first thing we should do is to make sure that employers are not subject to liability simply because they want to care for their employees. Together we can make this a true Patients' Bill of Rights bill. I am committed to having a solid piece of legislation sent to our President for his signature.

#### NOMINATION OF J. STEVEN GRILES

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am very concerned. The Energy and Natural Resources Committee has oversight of the Department of the Interior. As a consequence, we have had the responsibility of holding hearings on the nomination of various individuals for the Department of the Interior.

It is rather ironic that the only individual at the Department of the Interior who has been cleared by the Senate in its entirety is Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton. We have had a situation with regard to the Deputy Secretary, Mr. Steven Griles, that deserves some examination by this body.

Mr. Griles was nominated on March 9 by our President. Hearings were held on May 16, as I chaired the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. He was reported favorably out of the committee by a vote of 18-4 on May 23 of this year. All this was prior to the switch by Senator JEFFORDS who made his announcement on May 24. At that time, we immediately began to try to move the nomination. The minority also tried to get a time agreement.

According to the information we have from the floor staff, Griles was cleared on the Republican side on May 23. In an executive session on May 23, we did move one nomination. On May 24, we moved 19 nominations. On May 25, we moved 33 nominations. On May 26, we moved 8 nominations. In each case, Griles was cleared by the Republican side but objected to by the Democratic side. I wonder why.

During this period, a unanimous consent agreement was offered to allow for 2 hours of debate and a vote—the Democratic side said they needed 2 hours—with consideration the week we were to return from the Memorial Day recess.

That was again rejected by the Democrats, as was a modification that deleted the time certain and only included the time limitation. At that point, it was clear that the Democrats would control the floor and the timing on our return.

Yet in executive session on June 14, we cleared three additional nominations, but the Democrats would not clear Mr. Griles. Why?

As of today, Friday, June 22, Mr. Griles has been pending for 30 days without even a time agreement. Even if the majority leader wants to hold con-

sideration of further nominations hostage in the sense of organizing resolutions, an agreement on time for debate has nothing to do with the resolution and the actual scheduling of the debate.

Who suffers by this politicizing? Obviously, the Department of the Interior as a functioning body, and the public whom the Department of the Interior serves. We have a new Secretary, again, the only person down there who is confirmed. She needs help. I encourage the leadership on the Democratic side to let this nominee go. He has not been nor is he a part of the general holdup on the other nominees because action was taken on him prior to the change in the leadership in the Senate.

I am kind of amused by some of the comments of my colleagues on the other side who indicate a puzzlement, saying there have been no attacks on Griles. They simply have said all the nominations are on hold while the Senate reorganizes because of the switch of the Senator from Vermont.

I think the explanation I have given is not only accurate but gives thought to some of the excuses we have heard from the other side as to their justification. There is no justification.

#### ENERGY

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise to discuss a matter I know is very close to the interests and the heart of my colleague who occupies the chair. That is the issue of energy.

As we look at energy in view of the calendar, it is quite obvious that while energy appears to be the No. 1 issue in the minds of most Americans today, it certainly is not on the minds of the leadership in the Senate body. Energy is not even on the calendar.

It is my understanding, after the Patients' Bill of Rights, we will probably go to a supplemental. We may have the minimum wage, any number of things. Energy is not on the list.

I can only allude to what I assume is a political evaluation that somehow the Democrats are better off not working in a bipartisan manner to address the corrections that are going to be needed to bring about relief from this energy crisis but would rather object to any action being taken as they blame our President and his association with the energy industry as the cause of some of the problems associated with energy in this country.

When you think about it, you might say the Democrats are waging a war against the prosperity and freedoms associated with the character of this country.

The character of this country, to a large degree, is directly associated with a standard of living. That standard of living is based on affordable energy and a plentiful supply. Energy really powers our Nation's freedom, our national security. It gives us the flexibility to live our lives as we choose, to pursue our hopes and our

goals. Energy powers the workplace, moves the economy, moving it forward and bringing all of us along with it.

As we know, as evidenced by the polls, the energy supply and price of energy are all part of the energy crisis in this country. Supplies are threatened, costs are rising, and the resulting crisis is undermining our economy.

When an issue of this magnitude touches so many families in so many ways, Congress simply must act. We must do what we can to help provide solutions to the crisis. But now with the change of leadership, what we seem to have on the other side is a lack of interest in even including energy on the agenda. We have asked the Democratic leadership time and time again to schedule on the calendar time so we can debate the comprehensive energy bills that have been introduced. These bills are pending in the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, where I am now the ranking member. But the reality is we can't seem to move or get any time agreement or any priority in this body.

It is amazing that the emphasis seems to be blaming our President—a President who has proposed a methodology to fix it. He has developed from his energy task force report specific recommendations. One of the more interesting things is the manner in which some in the media are coming to the general assumption that there really isn't a shortage at all, and that this is something that has been trumped up by the oil industry, big oil, with the knowledge and support of the President.

How ridiculous, Mr. President. I have a chart here that shows why things are different, why this crisis exists. Anybody who suggests there is no crisis is not being realistic.

This is America's energy crisis today. It starts with our increased dependence on foreign oil. We are importing 56 percent of the total oil we consume in this country. In 1973, when we had gas lines around the block, when we had the Arab oil embargo, as a consequence of that, we were 37-percent dependent. We created a Strategic Petroleum Reserve. We felt that we never wanted to exceed 50 percent in imports because it would affect national security. Now we are 56-percent dependent and the Department of Energy says that it will be 66 percent by 2010.

Secondly, natural gas—which we have taken for granted for a long, long time—was about \$2.16 per thousand cubic feet 14 months ago. Today it is \$4, \$5, \$6. It has quadrupled. We are looking for electric energy from the resource of gas. So that has changed.

The nuclear industry—well, we haven't built a new nuclear plant in more than 10 years—nearly 20 years. We licensed a plant approximately 10 years ago. We are not doing anything in nuclear.

We are concerned about air quality and emissions and we are concerned about Kyoto, global warming, climate

change. What particular source of energy contributes more relief and does not emit any emissions of any consequence? Nuclear energy. The nuclear industry contributes 22 percent of the power generated in this country. We haven't done a thing in that area.

When we talk about gasoline prices, why are they so high? Obviously, it is the law of supply and demand. Even Congress can't change that. We haven't built a new refinery in 25 years. The last new one was built in my State of Alaska. The demand is up and we have more people driving.

An interesting thing to notice, while we have other sources of energy for power generation, is that America moves on oil. I wish we had another alternative, but we don't. Our ships, our trains, trucks, cars, airplanes—we don't fly in and out of Washington, DC, on hot air. Somebody has to drill the oil and refine it and transport it and put it in the airplanes, and so forth.

My point is clear. We don't have any other alternative for energy to move America, other than oil at this time. The technology simply doesn't exist.

We haven't built a new coal-fired plant in this country since 1995. Suddenly, we find that our electric transmission lines haven't been expanded, our natural gas transmission lines haven't been expanded. That is why we have an energy crisis. That is why it is different than ever before. It has all kind of come together like the "perfect storm." Everything has come together because we haven't had a policy. We haven't acted and now the American public is saying: What's going on? Why can't Congress fix it? Congress is pointing the finger at everybody and everything, blaming each other instead of moving ahead in a bipartisan manner.

The Democratic leadership refuses to put energy on the priority calendar for this body. I find that unconscionable. America's No. 1 priority is nowhere on the Democrats' list. I think, by holding up this process, they are holding up the prosperity of this Nation. One of our freedoms is to have plentiful and affordable supplies of energy. Our standard of living, to a large degree, is dependent upon that. Do we want to change that standard of living? Clearly, we do not. We want to advance that standard of living by bringing on affordable energy, alternative energy.

A lot of people say, well, conservation is the answer. Conservation is important. We can do a better job, but it will not make up the deficiency that exists. Some say alternatives. Some say renewables. But they constitute a very small percentage, even if you include hydroelectric, which is a renewable. Renewables constitute less than 4 percent of the total energy mix in this country. I wish they contributed more.

I am just afraid the Democrats would rather see this energy issue as a partisan issue, as opposed to a bipartisan victory for both Republicans and Democrats. I can only reach the conclusion that the Democrats are pulling

the plug on the energy solution, figuring they are better off to attack the President, the White House, big oil, than to address the problem. If they do, we are all going to be left in the dark.

I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CORZINE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there be a period for morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### SURVIVOR'S TALMUD DEDICATION CEREMONY

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I rise today to share with my colleagues an historical event which took place at the Chrysler Museum in Norfolk, VA on May 22, 2001. The event memorializes a remarkable chapter in Army history that occurred after World War II.

The event was the dedication of the Survivor's Talmud Exhibit which was done in honor of a truly great man, Leonard Strelitz, by his close friends. The story of the Survivor's Talmud speaks to the strength and resolve of a very determined people of Jewish faith some 54 years ago; and, to the resourcefulness and caring of a handful of U.S. Army soldiers.

Today, I place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD excerpts from the ceremony that convey the historical and spiritual splendor of this extraordinary tale to include: the Invocation, by Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach; Remarks and Benediction by Major General Gaylord T. Gunhus, Chief of Chaplains, U.S. Army; and Remarks by Mr. Marvin Simon and Mr. Walter Segaloff, hosts of the evening's events.

Due to Senate business on the day of the ceremony, I was not able to attend so I am also placing in the RECORD a copy of a letter I wrote to be read during the ceremony.

As this magnificent exhibit tours throughout the country, I hope it will instill in younger generations the critical importance of preserving human rights, individual dignity, and freedom. It will remind future generations of the incomprehensible sacrifices of the World War II generation and their need to always remain alert to prevent a reoccurrence in the future.

I ask unanimous consent to print the material to which I referred.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### REMARKS OF RABBI DR. ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

Mekor Hachaim, Source of All Life, Our God, Goodness' Guide, Dear and Distinguished Friends and Guests:

We have gathered on a momentous occasion at this enchanting setting of the Chrysler Museum of Art, dedicated to civilization's creative celebration of life, mindful that our Norfolk and Hampton Roads are home to the military might for sacred freedom's sake of the world's sole superpower, allowing the human enterprise to flourish into a blessing. Here from whence our heroic sons and daughters sailed to brave history's harshest storm of World War II, we recall with lasting gratitude and devotion our proud nation's sacrificial contribution in blood and spirit to ending the threat to creation of the Nazi kingdom of death, with its genocidal destruction of a third of the Jewish people and untold suffering to humanity.

I stand before you, profoundly awed, son of Polish Holocaust survivors who spent from 1947 to 1949 with my family in the Displaced Persons Camp of Wetzlar at Frankfurt, benefiting from a much appreciated reassuring embrace at a trying time of turmoil and transition. The printing for us of the Talmud on German soil facilitated by the U.S. Army, to save the Jewish soul, was an act of enduring love we shall always cherish. We knew that our miraculous physical perseverance was ultimately rooted in preserving our unique spiritual heritage that was Hitler's final target, seeking to eradicate from the planet Earth the essential Judeo-Christian values and ideals.

Honoring our U.S. Army and government through affirming by special friends the blessed memory of beloved Leonard Strelitz with acquiring a full 19 volume edition of that legendary Babylonian Talmud publication is most appropriate indeed, along with this being the beginning of the traveling treasured exhibit sponsored by the American Jewish Historical Society. Leonard's towering stature propelled him to rise to new heights of commitment, caring and compassion. A great American, the prophetic vision was fulfilled in him with both the lion and lamb dwelling in his big heart of a true leader with commanding presence. He singularly served the surviving remnant of his Jewish people as a tough lion, national chairman of the United Jewish Appeal aiding the embattled State of Israel, as well as a tender lamb in support of all worthy causes with the crown jewel of the Leonard R. Strelitz Diabetes Institutes at Eastern Virginia Medical School, placing personal success to serve the public agenda, most ably prodding others to follow suit, for none could refuse him.

To him, his dear wife Joyce who nourished and sustained him and the entire family, our heartfelt thanks. Leonard's inspiring legacy is forever intertwined with our tradition's best impulse and the noblest in our nation's character, shining testimony to his faith's abiding message to all of shalom's promise, purpose and peace. Let us say Amen.

[Rabbi Dr. Israel Zoberman, spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, is President of the Hampton Roads Board of Rabbis and Chairman of the Community Relations Council of the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater. He was born in Kazakhstan in 1945.]

#### SPEECH AND BENEDICTION BY MAJOR GENERAL GAYLORD T. GUNHUS

On behalf of the United States Army, it is with great pleasure that I accept this plaque. Thank you for this symbol, of your gracious recognition for the service our Army rendered to the Jewish community in post War